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fact. Our supreme task is to make the lawless law-abiding.

Every attempt to ignore this fundamental thing in human relationship has met defeat. The reason why America is not in the League of Nations is primarily that many in America conceived that organization to be an attempt to set up a government not of laws, but of men. Such undoubtedly was the plan of its founders. The outspoken purpose was to create an international organization of nine men dominated by five, which group of men of the great powers would have the power to dictate the foreign policies, at least of the small nations. Until the League of Nations can overcome this impression, it cannot count upon the co-operation of the United States; indeed, in our opinion, it cannot function in any manner commensurate with its high purposes.

There is something in the very words indicating the differences between covenant or league on the one hand and conference on the other. Ecclesiastically, covenant is a solemn compact between members of a church to maintain something, such as its faith, discipline, and the like. In history, covenant is connected with reformation and defense. In law, a covenant is a contract under seal. With the passing of years it will probably be increasingly agreed that the Covenant of the League of Nations adopted in Paris was a concrete, if fundamentally mistaken, expression of the noble ideal of a governed world. Following the attempt to set up the League of Nations, the future will witness an increasing attempt on the part of the nations to substitute reason for power and right for might.

Undoubtedly the meetings of the Council of the League and of the Assembly at Geneva, bringing representatives of various nationalities together around a common table, will play its part toward the fuller realization of the equality of States before the law. It will bring home to men increasingly the meaning of Paul's philosophy, that we are members one of another. America knows or apprehends these things. America knows that the will to end war is an international will, requiring an international medium for its orderly and effective expression. But America knows, further, that there is a difference between league or covenant on the one hand and conference on the other. The difference in name is a difference in substance. Leagues and covenants are Calvinistic; they are sanctions of force, of mandataries, of imperial grabs, of domination. League comes from an ancient word meaning to bind, a word that is given to us not only in league, but in ligature.

Conference, interestingly enough, harks back to two ancient words meaning to *bear with*. The Methodists employ the word in connection with their stated meetings for the consideration of ecclesiastical matters. The

Congregationalists use it for their system of voluntary associations.

The Conference at Washington will succeed only so far as it functions as a free association of free peoples in voluntary conference for the promotion of their mutual weal. It is in conference that correlative rights and duties are revealed and balanced. In a conference such as this in Washington there must be no grabbing of any Shantung, of any Korea, of any China. There must be no demanding of indemnities at the point of a pistol. There must be no carving of empires into new and warring elements. There must be no impositions of will by means of force in any Danzig, Saar Basin, or so-called Mandataries of the seven seas. There must be no balancing of power on the points of bayonets. There must be no piddling with plebiscites in any Upper Silesia. Quixotism, Pollyannaism, serve a purpose; but international achievement, mixing brains and history with its good will, must come to its own again here in the Conference at Washington. If not, the Washington Conference will fail.

If Japan signs on the dotted line because told that she must, it would be as well or better that she sign not at all. If France be relegated to the position of a second-rate power, treated as such, and criticised for resenting such patronizing airs, it would have been better had she never been invited to this conference. If the United States and Great Britain insist upon dictating to other nations weaker in lungs and legs, it would have been better had the Conference never been born.

So many of the hopes of forward-looking peoples rest upon this Washington Conference that, true it is, might and threats, dictation and coercion, covenants and leagues, must all be eliminated. Only in the spirit of conference, *bearing with*, mutuality under law, can this Washington gathering add its little to the slow up-building of that international justice which alone can overthrow wrongs and forfend the wastes of war.

## OUR CRITICISM OF FRANCE

FRANCE, our first and only ally, is once more treading the winepress alone. She is belabored from nearly every hand. Some one arises in the American Congress to propose that she be asked to pay her billions of indebtedness. She is advised to muster out her armies and to haul her fleet up on the beach. She is accused of chauvinism and imperialism. She is accused of a greedy *haute finance* and of unwillingness to co-operate with other nations. Such are a few of the criticisms hurled with some savagery against the nation which has suffered most because of the World War.

How quickly we change, and how soon we seem to forget. The France of 1922 has not changed from the

France of 1914. Nations, especially nations homogeneous as is France, do not change over night. The French spirit has not changed. French economic life has suffered. The economic resources of France were all but destroyed by the war. The problem of reconstruction involves the commercial and social life of the nation. Over 1,300,000 of her youth have been killed and half that number permanently wounded. The war has brought material losses of approximately \$12,000,000,000 gold. Whereas the French debt was \$7,000,000,000, it is now \$60,000,000,000. The \$4,000,000,000 of loans in Russia are bringing no interest and may never be paid. The condition is similar in the case of another billion dollars loaned in various quarters of the Balkans. The depreciated franc has all but paralyzed the former international life of France. There is a deficit in the ordinary and extraordinary budgets for the current year of approximately one billion francs. The devastated areas which before the war produced one-fifth of the income from taxation have not as yet sufficiently recovered to be taxed. Based upon the per capita revenue, France is now taxed 19 per cent as against Germany's 12 per cent and the 8 per cent in the United States.

We judge it must be difficult for the French people to understand why, in the light of these facts, she should become the butt of so much criticism. If she is not to receive from Germany the sums agreed upon in the Treaty of Versailles, she cannot feel any injustice in her demand that Germany shall reconstruct her ruined industrial plants and put them at least as they were in 1914. The French people think with their brains. They know that they are face to face with a defeated enemy with a larger population than their own. They know that their country has been invaded five times since 1789. They long for peace. But they do not propose to put their heads willingly beneath the foot of a German *revanche*. The French people wish two things: They wish to feel secure along the Rhine, and they wish their ruined industries to be replaced. In the light of the fact that France stood between Germany and the rest of the world through five dreadful years, these demands do not seem unreasonable.

And yet the criticism goes on. Lord Curzon rises in his place to "warn" France against what he calls her "policy of isolation," when the one thing that France is aiming to achieve is co-operation.

When we think upon France, we may feel sure that when she acts as a nation the probabilities are that she is acting with care and foresight. Even the problem of her stationary population seems in fair way of solution. It is encouraging to be told that France has now twice as many marriages annually as were recorded before the war. There are now over 40,000 more births annually than in 1913, while there has been a marked decrease in

the annual number of deaths. She is producing as much wheat now as in 1913, the average yield per acre exceeding that of any other period in her history. During the first half of 1921 her exports exceeded her imports by nearly four million francs. French colonizing skill continues to be successful in Algeria, Indo-China, and French Morocco, no Irish, Egyptian, or India problems arising in any of these quarters.

We do not share M. Briand's fears of German aggression. As a matter of military technique Germany will not be able to attack France for a long time. But dispassionate observers cannot fail, under the circumstances, to understand the French psychology. In the light of the last eight years of French history, we can afford to be very patient with the people of France.

### THE IRISH FREE STATE

UNDER date of January 7, 1922, the Dail Eireann, which, being interpreted, means Irish Conference, accepted the treaty, the text of which appeared in *ADVOCATE OF PEACE* for December. Thus, the oldest and most serious of Britain's quarrels seems about to be composed. In the language of the *Manchester Guardian*, "The impossible has happened." The Irish Free State is born. It is to have the rank in the British Commonwealth of the Dominion of Canada, with a parliament and executive, and with a governor-general appointed by Britain to represent the Crown. Members of the parliament of the Irish Free State pay their allegiance to the Irish Free State and pledge faithfulness to the King. Citizenship in Ireland carries with it citizenship in Great Britain. Ireland thus becomes one of the members of the British Commonwealth of States along with the Dominion of Canada, the Commonwealth of Australia, the Dominion of New Zealand, and the union of South Africa. She accepts her share of debt and pension liabilities. The naval defense of Ireland remains with Britain, with the option, however, that after five years Ireland may share in her own coast defense. The defense army in Ireland must be proportioned to Great Britain's as Ireland's population bears to the population of Great Britain. Irish and British ports are to be open to the vessels of each. Whether or not Ulster is to come within the new State is for Ulster to decide. If Ulster enters she will retain her parliament and government; but in matters in which the Irish Free State has powers not possessed by the Ulster government these powers may, under certain safeguards, be exercised by the Irish Free State in northern Ireland. If Ulster refuses, a commission will determine her boundary. Ireland is not independent. She now becomes a self-governing member of the British Empire. She will be a member of the Imperial Conference.